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SUBJECT: AUSTRIA HAS A NEW PRESIDENT - THOMAS KLESTIL  
- INAUGURATED

1. SUMMARY: KLESTIL'S INAUGURATION AS PRESIDENT OF AUSTRIA ON JULY 8 PROCEEDED IN A CONCILIATORY ATMOSPHERE. IN JOINT PARLIAMENTARY SESSION, SPEAKERS, INCLUDING WALDHEIM, DEPLORED THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S PAST. KLESTIL GAVE A BALANCED INAUGURATION SPEECH WHICH LAID OUT THE ISSUES FACING AUSTRIAN FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICY, AND WHICH SET A FORWARD-LOOKING, BUSINESSLIKE TONE FOR HIS PRESIDENCY. END SUMMARY.

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2. BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT CONVENED IN A JOINT SESSION HELD IN THE OLD PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY ROOM THE MORNING OF JULY 8 FOR THE FORMAL SWEARING IN OF THE NEW PRESIDENT. THE OATH OF OFFICE WAS TAKEN, AND A NEW ERA IN AUSTRIAN POLITICAL LIFE BEGAN. THE CEREMONY WAS WATCHED BY FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF FORMER, OUTGOING, AND INCOMING PRESIDENTS, MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, AND THE FULL MEMBERSHIP OF BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT. SEATED ALONE IN A CHAIR ON THE FLOOR OF THE CHAMBER, **KURT WALDHEIM** LISTENED TO SPEECHES BY PRESIDENTS OF BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT RECOUNTING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HIS LIFE AND HIS SIX YEARS AS PRESIDENT OF AUSTRIA. HE THEN RESPONDED WITH HIS OWN ADDRESS. THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT, ESCORTED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY PRESIDENTS, THEN LEFT THE CHAMBER WHILE MUSIC BY THE BAROQUE COMPOSER HENRY PURCELL WAS PLAYED. KLESTIL WATCHED THIS PART OF THE CEREMONY FROM THE GALLERY.

3. THE FORMALITIES, CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATED, CONTINUED WITH KLESTIL LEAVING THE CHAMBER, PROCEEDING AROUND THE OUTSIDE OF THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING, AND ENTERING THE MAIN HALL FROM THE FRONT, WHERE HE WAS GREETED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PARLIAMENT AND ESCORTED TO THE CHAIR VACATED BY WALDHEIM. FROM THERE HE LISTENED WHILE THE PRESIDENT OF THE UPPER HOUSE WELCOMED HIM. HE THEN ROSE TO TAKE THE OATH AS PRESIDENT, AND SUBSEQUENTLY DELIVERED A 30 MINUTE ADDRESS IN WHICH HE SET A TONE OF DYNAMISM FOR HIS TERM. WITH THE PLAYING/SINGING OF THE AUSTRIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM, THE CEREMONY CONCLUDED. PRESIDENT KLESTIL PROCEEDED BY MOTORCADE FOR HELDENPLATZ FOR A FLAG CEREMONY. HE LEFT HIS CAR JUST SHORT OF THE HELDENPLATZ TO TALK AND SHAKE HANDS WITH POLICE AND ONLOOKERS. IN WHAT APPEARED TO BE A SPONTANEOUS GESTURE, HE PROCEEDED THE REST OF THE WAY ON FOOT.

4. THE FESTIVITIES LEADING UP TO THE JULY 8 INAUGURATION INCLUDED A GREAT "TATTOO" FOR WALDHEIM AND A LUNCH IN HIS HONOR HOSTED BY THE CABINET. THE EVENTS WHICH FOLLOWED INCLUDED A FLAG PARADE IN FRONT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE AND A RECEPTION FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

5. THE INAUGURATION, AS NEVER BEFORE IN THE HISTORY OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC, REPRESENTED THE END OF AN ERA. LIKE THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN, THE TONE WAS DIGNIFIED AND THE FORMALITY OF THE CEREMONY DOMINATED THE FESTIVITIES.

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SPO PARLIAMENTARY PRESIDENT SPEAKS OF INJUSTICE TO WALDHEIM  
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6. THE JOINT PARLIAMENTARY SESSION TO MARK WALDHEIM'S DEPARTURE FROM OFFICE AND KLESTIL'S INAUGURATION WAS A HIGHLY FORMAL OCCASION IN LINE WITH PROTOCOLARY REQUIREMENTS. BUT, DESPITE THE NATURE OF THE EVENT, THE SPEECHES WERE SUBSTANTIVE. PARLIAMENTARY PRESIDENT FISCHER'S FAREWELL SPEECH FOR WALDHEIM WAS PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY IN THIS RESPECT. ARGUING ON BEHALF OF

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WALDHEIM, SURPRISING FOR AN AUSTRIAN SOCIAL DEMOCRAT, AND PARTICULARLY FOR THE LIBERAL INTELLECTUAL FISCHER, THE PARLIAMENTARY PRESIDENT SAID THAT "INJUSTICE HAD BEEN DONE TO WALDHEIM WHEN HE WAS ACCUSED OF WAR CRIMES." THE POSITIONS OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS ON WALDHEIM HAD OFTEN NOT BEEN BASED ON CAREFUL EXAMINATIONS OF THE PRESIDENT'S BIOGRAPHY. FISCHER ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT WALDHEIM ALSO MUST UNDERSTAND MANY CITIZENS WERE CONCERNED OVER STATEMENTS IN THE COURSE OF THE AFFAIR WHICH DID NOT DEMONSTRATE SUFFICIENT DISTANCE FROM NAZI TIMES AND THE INHUMANE POLICY OF THAT ERA. FISCHER POINTED TO THE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS WHICH HAS BEEN MADE SINCE 1986 IN CONFRONTING AUSTRIA'S NATIONAL SOCIALIST PAST. THIS RANGED FROM DISCUSSIONS DURING THE ANSCHLUSS ANNIVERSARY IN 1988 TO WALDHEIM'S 1991 STATEMENT THAT HE WOULD NOT RUN AGAIN SO AS TO AVOID FURTHER CONFRONTATION. FISCHER CONCLUDED HIS SPEECH, WHICH HE OTHERWISE DEVOTED TO A POLITICAL TOUR D'HORIZON OF THE PAST SIX YEARS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TERM, SAYING WALDHEIM HAD EXERCISED HIS OFFICE AS PRESIDENT TO HIS BEST ABILITIES. HE EXPRESSED THE THANKS OF PARLIAMENT. (COMMENT: PUBLIC AND EDITORIAL COMMENTS ON THE TREATMENT OF WALDHEIM AND THE U.S. WATCHLIST DECISION, AND THE FORMAL GOA REQUEST THAT THE DECISION BE REVIEWED, INDICATE THAT WHILE THE WALDHEIM ERA IS NOW OVER, AUSTRIAN SENSITIVITY ON THE ISSUE IS NOT. WHILE KLESTIL HAS FACED SQUARELY FORWARD AS HE BEGINS HIS TERM AS PRESIDENT, AND MAY SIDESTEP PERSONAL DISCUSSION OF THE WALDHEIM AFFAIR, IT WILL LIKELY REMAIN A SUBTLE INFLUENCE IN THE EQUATION OF U.S.-AUSTRIAN RELATIONS FOR MANY YEARS. END COMMENT.)

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WALDHEIM APPLAUDS HARMONY AND REGRETS CONTROVERSY  
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7. WALDHEIM EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR THE HARMONIOUS SPIRIT SURROUNDING HIS DEPARTURE FROM OFFICE. HE DISCUSSED THE POLITICAL UPHEAVAL AND ENORMOUS CHANGES IN THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION WHICH OCCURRED DURING HIS TERM OF OFFICE. HE WENT ON TO COMMENT ON THE CONTROVERSY REGARDING HIS WARTIME PAST. AS IN HIS JUNE 1991 STATEMENT, WHEN HE EXPLAINED WHY HE WOULD NOT RUN AGAIN, WALDHEIM REGRETTED NOT ALWAYS HAVING FOUND THE APPROPRIATE WORDS WHICH REFLECTED THE ATROCITIES OF THE NAZI ERA. HOWEVER, HE ALSO APPEALED FOR UNDERSTANDING FOR THOSE WHO HAD SERVED IN A WAR THEY DID NOT WANT, WHO HAD BEEN CAUGHT BETWEEN REJECTING A REGIME BUT HAVING TO WEAR ITS UNIFORM. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS UNIFORM OF COURSE ALSO WAS A SYMBOL FOR DEATH AND MURDER FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE NAZI CRIMES. WALDHEIM EXHORTED HIS AUDIENCE TO REMEMBER THAT AN ERA LIKE THAT MUST NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN. IN WELCOMING THE HARMONIOUS ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH HE CONCLUDED HIS TENURE AS PRESIDENT, HE EXPLAINED THAT HE COULD NOT HAVE RESIGNED SINCE A RESIGNATION WOULD HAVE CAST THE LIGHT OF COLLECTIVE GUILT ON AN ENTIRE GENERATION AND WOULD HAVE ENTAILED A NATIONAL CRISIS IN AUSTRIA.

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KLESTIL PRESENTS A GAMEPLAN OF AUSTRIAN PRIORITIES  
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8. KLESTIL DELIVERED A HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL AND STATESMAN-LIKE SPEECH. NOT AFRAID OF GETTING TOO POLITICAL - SOMETHING TRADITIONALLY DEEMED INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE OFFICE - KLESTIL SPOKE OUT FORTHRIGHTLY ON THE NECESSITY OF POLITICAL RENEWAL AND DOMESTIC REFORMS AND ON AUSTRIA'S INTERNATIONAL POLICIES WHICH, HE STRESSED, SHOULD FOCUS ON PARTICIPATION IN PEACE-MAKING INITIATIVES AND CONFLICT-RESOLUTION. REGARDING AUSTRIA'S NEUTRALITY, KLESTIL SAID THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE AN END IN ITSELF AND SHOULD BE DEVELOPED IN THE DIRECTION OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY. THE NEW PRESIDENT STRESSED THAT THE COUNTRY SHOULD NEVER FORGET HISTORY. "WE OWE IT TO THE VICTIMS, BUT ALSO TO OURSELVES TO CONFRONT THE PAST." HE CALLED UPON THE AUSTRIAN POPULATION TO WORK WITH HIM IN THE COMING YEARS TO THE BENEFIT OF THE COUNTRY, AND PLEDGED HIMSELF TO WORK FOR ALL AUSTRIANS DURING THE NEXT YEARS.

9. COMMENT: THE CONCILIATORY APPROACH TO THE END OF WALDHEIM'S TENURE AS PRESIDENT WAS THE NOTABLE CHARACTERISTIC OF THE INAUGURATION. KLESTIL, WHO REPRESENTS THE SAME POLITICAL PARTY AS WALDHEIM, COULD BE EXPECTED TO SET THAT TONE. BUT, WALDHEIM'S ONCE STEADFAST OPPONENTS, THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, SEEMED TO MAKE AN EFFORT AT OBJECTIVITY, POINTING TO THE "INJUSTICE" WHICH HAD BEEN RENDERED TO THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT. THE INAUGURATION WAS A CELEBRATION OF AUSTRIAN NATIONAL UNITY AND DIGNITY, AND HELPED HEAL THE WOUNDS OF THE WALDHEIM ERA. BUTTRESSING THIS POSITIVE APPROACH, KLESTIL'S ADDRESS WAS A DYNAMIC AND WELL-FORMULATED START FOR HIS TERM OF OFFICE. AS A TV COMMENTATOR NOTED, KLESTIL'S 18 YEARS IN THE U.S. HAVE PRODUCED AN "AMERICAN UNDERSTANDING OF POLITICS" ON HIS PART. THIS MAY MEAN A MORE DYNAMIC AND ACTIVE INTERPRETATION OF HIS OFFICE.

SWIHART

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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